

CHEMISTRY IN AGRICULTURE.—At the meeting of the Royal Agricultural Society, at Lewes, last week, Lord Palmerston said,—"I cannot but think that the progress of chemical science, and the application of that science to practical agriculture, may lead you to something which will render you less anxious and solicitous about guano, and that instead of sending to the other end of the world for more manure for our fields, we shall find something nearly, if not quite, as good within a few hundred yards of our dwellings. Now, gentlemen, I have heard a definition of dirt. I have heard it said that dirt is nothing but a thing in a wrong place. Now, the dirt of our towns precisely corresponds with that definition. The dirt of our towns ought to be upon our fields, and if there could be such a reciprocal community of interest between the country and the towns—that the country should purify the towns, and the towns should fertilise the country—I am much disposed to think the British farmer would care less than he does, though he still might care something, about Peruvian guano. We all acknowledge that there are certain laws of nature, and that those who violate these laws invariably suffer for it. Well, it is a law of nature that nothing is destroyed. Matter is decomposed, but only for the purpose of again assuming some new form, useful for the purposes of the human race. But we neglect that law. We allow all decomposed substances in towns to pollute the atmosphere, to ruin the health, to produce premature misery, to be pestilent to life, and destructive of existence. Well, gentlemen, if, instead of that, there could be a system devised by which these substances, which are noxious where they now are, could be transferred so as to fertilise the adjoining districts, I am persuaded that, not only would the health of the town populations be thereby greatly improved, but the finances of the agricultural population would derive considerable benefit from the change. You all know, gentlemen,—all who have attended to the subject and read recent publications must know,—that for an expenditure per acre far less than that which produces one manuring of Peruvian guano, you may establish permanent arrangements, by which, bringing from the towns fertilising liquids, you would improve your property, and a permanent improvement would be made in the land at a far less expense than is now required to produce a single crop. I therefore recommend you, gentlemen, to ponder the maxim that "knowledge is power;" and, as the diffusion of the most useful kind of knowledge is one of the main objects for which the Royal Agricultural Society was established, I am persuaded it will tend mainly and most efficiently to the advancement of the interest and the power of the agricultural class of the country."

IMPROVED DWELLINGS FOR MARRIED SOLDIERS.—A meeting of officers was lately held at Willis's Rooms, Colonel Angerstein in the chair, at which the following resolutions were agreed to:—"That, in the opinion of this meeting, improved sanitary dwellings for the married soldier may be constructed on a principle combining a fair remuneration to the landlord, with increased convenience to the tenant. 2. That his Serene Highness Prince Edward of Saxe Weimar, Lord Colville, the Hon. F. Villiers, M.P. Colonel the Hon. Arthur Upton, Colonel Angerstein, Colonel Wigram, Lieutenant-Colonel H. Daniell, Captain Cocks, Captain Carleton, Captain Higginson, the Rev. R. W. Browne, and Mr. Montagu Gore be appointed trustees for carrying out this object, and they are hereby empowered to act accordingly." Funds were subscribed to the extent of about 4,000*l*. The trustees are in treaty for a site on which to commence operations.

THE SHOP SUN-BLIND NUISANCE.—In many other towns besides London this great nuisance seems to prevail. In Southampton the magistrates have been of late appealed to against tradesmen for having these blinds under seven feet from the pavement. It is full time the power of the metropolitan magistrates were appealed to against the same nuisance.

GASWORKS AND STATISTICS.—Plans and specifications for the erection of a gas work at Knighton have been prepared by Mr. E. E. E. of Wolverhampton, gas engineer, who has contracted for the immediate commencement of the works, which belong to a company recently formed for the supply of gas, coke, and coal to the town of Knighton. The old gas company of Ludlow have ceased to exist, the cause of their extinction having been a foolish determination to keep up the price of their gas to 12*s*. a thousand cubic feet. The new company appear to be inclined to follow in the old path, for even their prices are now regarded as unsatisfactory, and another work will be started unless a reduction be shortly made. The Girvan Gas Company are said to have reaped a profit during last year equal to 14 per cent. on their share capital. Their works are to be extended, a new gas-holder made, and the price of their gas reduced. The gas company at Cupar have declared their usual dividend of 7½ per cent. and resolved to reduce the price of their gas from 8*s*. 4*d*. to 7*s*. 6*d*. The Buckhaven Gas Company have declared a dividend of 6 per cent. for the past year. The Elgin Gas Company have been so little injured or rather so much benefited by reducing the price of their gas last year, that they have been discussing the propriety of making a further reduction this year. They have just declared a dividend of 6 per cent. at the twenty-second annual meeting of their shareholders.

RESULTS OF ELECTRIC SHOCKS IN WHALE FISHING.—In reference to the process of stunning whales in capture, the *Liverpool Albion* states that some successful experiments have been announced by Mr. E. A. Heineken, of Bremen, the inventor, as having been reported to him by Captain Georken, of the Bremen whale ship *Aberick Heineken*. Capt. Georken, in a letter dated New Zealand, Dec. 13, 1851, writes as follows:—"The first experiment we made with the new invention was upon a shark, applying the electricity from the machine with one magnet. The fish, after being struck, instantly turned over on its side, and, after we had poured in upon him a stream of electricity for a few moments, by turning the handle of the machine, the shark became stiff as a piece of wood. We have as yet had but one chance to try the experiment upon a whale, which was made by the four magnet machine. The whale, upon being struck, made one dash onward, then turned on his side, and was rendered perfectly powerless. Although I have as yet not been fortunate enough to test the invention in more instances, I have the fullest confidence in the same, and doubt not to be able to report the most astonishing results on my return from the Arctic Seas, where I am now bound."

FALL OF A CEILING ON FOUR HUNDRED PEOPLE.—At a Mormonite, or "Latter-day Saints" Conference, held lately at Newport, in Wales, a heavy ceiling, beams and all, fell suddenly on the assemblage,—strange to say "without injury to one single Mormon," a circumstance which, we hesitate not to say, is in some sense to be regretted, considering the influence which it will undoubtedly have in extending the Mormonite imposture, more especially as, according to the *Morning Herald*, obscure hints or promises had been held out previously by the "prophets" of the sect, that "miracles would be performed." "When the party were all extricated," adds the *Herald*, "another hall was obtained, and there the remainder of the evening was devoted to an ovation to the elders and the prophets who had wrought the anticipated miracle of causing a ceiling to fall upon the heads of the saints without injury. The occurrence has occasioned a remarkable sensation in the town." It reminds one of the "miracle" wherewith a thoughtless Jack Tar of England once astonished the natives of a Dutch port. Jack had given obscure hints that he would do something to astonish them, but while really in vain endeavouring to do so, by an awkward attempt to stand on his head at the extremity of the topmast, he tumbled down amongst the rigging, and alighted, by a rare chance, on his feet, strange to say without breaking one

single bone, when he coolly looked about him, and asked his Dutch mates if any of them could do the like of that. The Mormonite profits will, doubtless, be largely multiplied by the "decided hit" at Newport, which will be so much trading capital to the "saints" for years to come.

ROOF-REARINGS, &c.—The Lyceum at Sunderland has just been covered in. The music-hall is 103 feet long by 45 wide, and is estimated to hold 2,500 persons (being the largest room in the district). The lecture-hall is 59 feet by 40. There will be also a news-room, library, observatory, &c.; in all, 17 rooms or halls. On Monday in last week the operatives employed in the erection, to the number of about one hundred, according to the *Gateshead Observer*, were treated with a sumptuous dinner in the music-hall, at the expense of the proprietor, Mr. R. F. Cunningham, to celebrate the covering in. On Friday week, according to the *Lincolshire Chronicle*, Mr. Richard Ellison, of Sudbrooke Holme, gave a supper at Scotterne, to the workmen employed in erecting a residence for Mr. Battersby, and also to his labourers. About sixty sat down to a bountiful repast, under the presidency of Mr. George Bacon, foreman to Mr. Ward, the builder of the house.—A substantial dinner of good old English cheer, says the *Staffordshire Advertiser*, was given on 9th instant, by the Earl of Harrowby, the proprietor of Sandon Hall (now in course of erection), to about eighty workmen employed at the works. Mr. Parker, contractor for the mason work, occupied the chair. Mr. Leigh, clerk of the works, officiated as vice-president. Amongst other appropriate proceedings, Mr. M'Leish proposed the health of Mr. Burn, the architect, also Messrs. of James Paton and Sons, contractors for the carpenter and joiner work.

PROPOSED MONUMENT AT CHELSEA.—A monument is about to be erected at Chelsea (to the memory of the soldiers who fell in India) in the small park or square fronting the Hospital in the Queen's-road: a model, full size, is now in course of erection. It is of the obelical form, with three steps at the base: height, 25 feet; breadth at top, 2 feet; at bottom of needle, 3 feet 10 in. surmounted by a ball. The steps as now made are ill proportioned, and the whole will appear without taste, as much from the position as the design. The position chosen is between the double row of fine trees in the centre walk in that portion of the square before mentioned, and will be completely hid by the trees; whereas, if either side of the walk was chosen, a large space (several acres) would enable the monument to be seen. Unless prevented, we shall have an unsightly erection in an improper place.—J. O.

MR. A. W. PUGIN.—According to a contemporary, "Mr. Pugin is now in his old age!" which is so far from being correct, that he cannot be more than forty-two—a time of life at which most people would be affronted at having the vague epithet of "elderly" applied to them. The name of Pugin has indeed been before the public very long; but it was first as that of the father, whose "Gothic Examples," and similar works, did so much for the study of that style of architecture. Father and son appear to have been confounded together in more than one instance, the most remarkable one of all occurring in Hagler's "Künstler-Lexicon," where the elder Pugin, who had then been dead several years, is spoken of as living at the time, and as having erected many churches and chapels; while the son is not mentioned at all. This egregious mistake is to be paralleled only by the startling omission in another German publication, the "Conversations-Lexicon für Bilden de Kunst," where, notwithstanding that many obscure architects have articles assigned them, there is not so much as the name of Charles Barry.—A. Z.

CHURCH STEEPLE STRUCK BY LIGHTNING.—The steeple of the church of Husum, in Schleswig Holstein, was struck by lightning on Tuesday in week before last, and set on fire. The fire extended with great rapidity, and destroyed thirty-one houses.